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Northern Illinois University

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Dear Director of University Honors Program search committee:

In 2012 I began teaching upper division courses for the NIU University Honors Program and have been eagerly awaiting the opportunity to apply for this position. For the past four years I have delivered courses focused on the social aspects of sport participation and sport and exercise psychology (see appendices for Fall 2015 honors course teaching evaluation) and supervise honors capstones for those students who wish to further explore the topics discussed in class. From these experiences, students have developed application based manuals, theoretical review papers, and conducted research – which has led to dissemination in referred forums. Thus, after examining the requirements for the position I believe the skills I have developed and responsibilities I currently execute significantly align. Please accept the enclosed materials as my formal application.

Presently I serve in a leadership capacity within the Department of Kinesiology and Physical Education as the undergraduate director of kinesiology (BS program) and the graduate director of the MS Ed. program. Within the two programs I oversee 20 faculty/instructors, 60 graduate students, and 300 undergraduate students. While in these leadership roles my colleagues and I have taken tangible steps to increase the visibility and strengthen the reputation of our programs by being noted in the Education Recognition Program® by the National Strength and Conditioning Association (NSCA), securing more than \$250,000 of equipment for laboratory/weight room space, and publicizing the graduate program through graduate directories and fairs at national conferences. Furthermore, in 2014 under my leadership we developed and implemented a completely revised curriculum for the kinesiology undergraduate program, which was the first significant curriculum overhaul since 1999. This new curriculum, designed with multiple clinical experiences and programmatic tracks – that students can customize based on their desired career goals – has enhanced our student recruitment and retention, allowed for a more systematic designation of courses to be offered each semester, afforded new internship opportunities with various companies/agencies, and has improved the process of writing assessment reports.

My role as an academic leader is not program exclusive, as I represent my department, college, and discipline in a variety of settings. For instance, I have chaired the KNPE department's personnel committee, presently represent the department on Faculty Senate, and sit on University Council – representing the College of Education. With regards to my discipline, I am the current secretary-treasurer for the Association for Applied Sport Psychology (AASP), responsible for managing a yearly budget of nearly \$800,000 and charged with utilizing best practices when devising budgets, developing new initiatives to enhance income streams, and articulating the

mission of the organization to constituents and key stakeholders. Furthermore, much like NIU's system of fiscal management (i.e., 41 monies, O2 monies, etc.), this position requires me to be familiar with "buckets" of where money is held and spent. Finally, I am also a member of the NIU Student-Athlete Well-Being Committee – which is composed of Melissa Dawson (Associate Athletic Director), Phil Voorhis (NIU Athletics Head Athletic Trainer), Brooke Ruxton (Executive Director of Counseling and Consultation Services), and Randi Napientek (Assistant Director of Office of Student Academic Success) – as well as provide sport psychology consulting services to NIU athletes upon request.

In the area of scholarship I am also highly productive, as I have amassed 28 peer-reviewed publications and numerous presentations in the past eight years at NIU. These works follow a general line of research focused on the psycho-social aspects of individuals who participate in settings where performance is evaluated (e.g., sport, exercise, military, etc.) and help to explain the characteristics of those who thrive in leadership roles. By implementing a teacher-scholar model with students, I have been able to mentor students in the discipline of research and have partnered with 12 unique students (at both the undergraduate and graduate levels) in disseminating our findings.

Finally, and to qualities that my references can speak to, I am an extremely self-motivated, self-directed, and organized individual who strives to set the standard for others. Whether it be actively seeking out participation in programs such as the Multicultural Curriculum Transformation Institute at NIU – where faculty engage in workshops to revamp courses and foster a sense of inclusion for all students – or attending the American Kinesiology Association's (AKA) Leadership Workshop – where fellow department chairs and deans from around the country discuss strategies for leading strategic planning sessions, developing innovative ways to enhance curricular offerings, and systemically implement the process of evaluation to motivate faculty/staff – I am, at my core, an opportunist who views everyday as a solvable puzzle. Therefore, I could not be more resolute in believing that a university honors program director must cultivate key character traits in students (e.g., initiative, perseverance towards goals, devotion to service, charisma). In my interactions with honors students I do this by both modeling said behaviors and structuring classroom activities so students can internalize these traits from first-hand experience.

Attached you will find a copy of my curriculum vitae, list of references, and teaching evaluation report from my most recent honors seminar class. If you require any additional information or materials, please do not hesitate to contact me. In the meantime, I look forward to hearing from you following your assessment of my credentials. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Todd Anders Gilson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Todd" being the most prominent.

Todd Anders Gilson, PhD, CSCS